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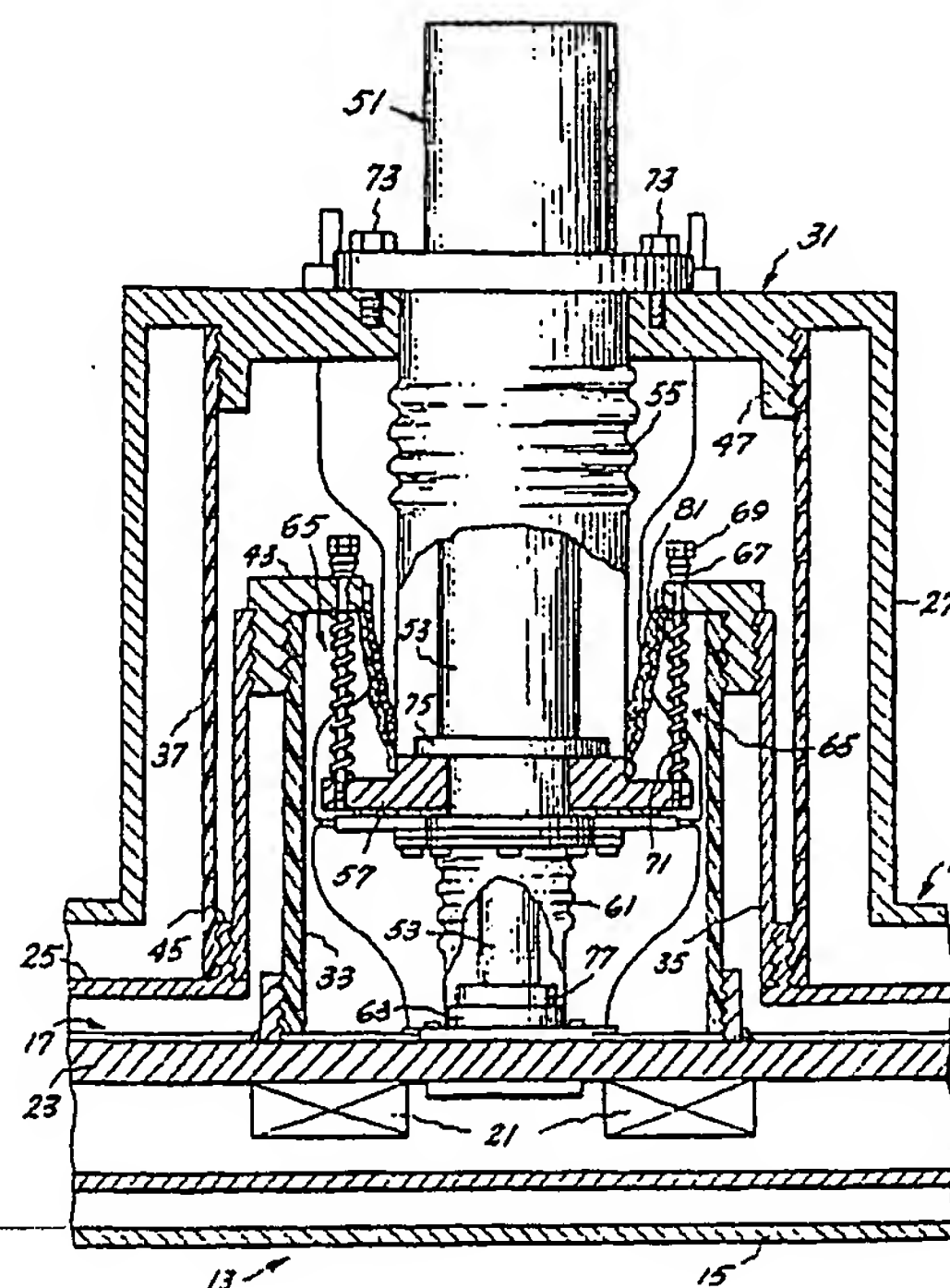
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(54) Refrigerated MR magnet support system.

(57) A magnet cartridge (17) and thermal shield (25) are supported by three concentric nested thin wall tubes (33,35,37) from a vacuum vessel (11). The innermost tube (33) of thermal insulating material is affixed to magnet cartridge at one end and supports the first stage heat station (57) at the other. The intermediate tube (35) of heat conducting material transfers the load from the inner tube (33) to the outer tube (37), which is affixed to the vacuum vessel. The intermediate tube also thermally connects the first stage heat station to the thermal radiation shield. The outer tube also supports the thermal radiation shield. All of the tube joints rely on epoxy-bonded threads to provide good mechanical strength, low motion thermal contact resistance, and no relative motion.

Fig. 3



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REFRIGERATED MR MAGNET SUPPORT SYSTEM

The present relates to a cryocooler interface and magnet cartridge support for magnetic resonance (MR) magnets. Magnet cartridge suspensions in MR magnets are typically made of tension members which allow motion at the attachment points to accommodate thermal contraction and expansion which is dependent on whether the magnet is being cooled down or returning to ambient conditions. Motion at the attachment points causes heating and can result in a magnet quench during current ramp up in the magnet. During a magnet quench, a portion of the magnet conductor and eventually the entire magnet ceases to be superconductive with large quantities of heat dissipated. The problem of frictional heating is of particular concern in refrigerated magnets which do not have helium to intercept and dissipate the heat generated by the sliding motion of the suspension system. In a refrigerated magnet, the heat generated by the sliding motion is carried to the magnet cartridge by the suspension and then carried by the magnet cartridge to the cryocooler. If the conductor in the magnet cartridge exceeds its critical temperature, a quench can occur and ramp up must begin again.

In one aspect the present invention provides a strong suspension system for the magnet cartridge and thermal shield which has no sliding contacts at the interface with the magnet cartridge or the vacuum vessel.

In another aspect it can be seen to provide a suspension system for the magnet cartridge and thermal shield and also an interface for a cryocooler which limits the conductive heat load from the vacuum vessel to the magnet cartridge.

In one embodiment of the invention a superconductive magnet cooled by a two stage cryocooler is provided including a vacuum vessel, a magnet cartridge, a thermal radiation shield and three concentric cylindrical tubes. The magnet cartridge has at least one superconductive coil and is situated in the vacuum vessel. The thermal radiation shield surrounds the magnet cartridge and is spaced away from the magnet cartridge and the vacuum vessel. A first stage heat station is provided for removably thermally engaging the first stage of the cryocooler. A second stage heat station removably engages the second stage of the cryocooler and is in thermal and supporting contact with the magnet cartridge. The three concentric cylindrical tubes include an outer tube, and intermediate tube and an inner tube. The outer tube substantially encloses the intermediate tube and the intermediate tube substantially encloses the inner tube. Each of the tubes have a first and

second end. The first and second heat stations are situated inside the inner tube. The outer tube is secured to the vacuum vessel at its first end and to the thermal radio-shield and the first end of the intermediate tube at its second end. The second end of the intermediate tube is secured to the first end of the inner tube. The second end of the inner tube extends through an aperture in the thermal radiation shield and is secured to the magnet cartridge. Spring bias means secured between the second end of the intermediate tube and the first stage heat station for maintaining a constant pressure between the cryocooler first stage and the first stage heat station when the second stage of the cryocooler is forced in contact with the second stage heat station. Also provided are means for thermally connecting the thermal radiation to the first stage heat station.

The invention, both as to organization and method of practice, together with objectives and advantages thereof, may best be understood by reference to the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing figures in which:

Figure 1 is a partial end view of an MR magnet vacuum vessel cooled by a two stage cryocooler;

Figure 2 is side view taken along lines II-II in Figure 1 showing a support system for a magnet cartridge and interface for the cryocooler in accordance with the present invention situated in the vacuum vessel; and

Figure 3 is an enlarged view of the interior of the cylindrical extension of the vacuum vessel showing the support system for the magnet cartridge and for the cryocooler.

Referring now to the drawing and particularly Figure 1 thereof, a cylindrical vacuum vessel 11 having an axially extending bore 13 is shown. The vacuum vessel can be fabricated from carbon steel with the bore sleeve 15 fabricated from stainless steel. The vacuum vessel has welded seams. A cylindrical magnet cartridge 17, which can be seen in Figure 2, is located inside the vessel 11 and surrounds and is spaced away from the bore sleeve 15. The magnet cartridge comprises superconductive coils 21 and supports 23 to position the coils relative to one another. One type of magnet cartridge is shown in our coiled European application No. (based on US application Serial No. 395636 filed 17 August 1989) entitled "MAGNET CARTRIDGE FOR MAGNETIC RESONANCE MAGNET", and the disclosure in which is hereby incorporated by reference. The magnet cartridge 17 is surrounded by a cylindrical thermal shield 25

which encloses the magnet cartridge but is spaced away therefrom most easily seen in the enlarged view of Figure 3.

The vacuum vessel has a cylindrical extension 27 which protrudes radially outwardly from the vacuum vessel 11. The cylindrical extension has an annular shaped cover 31. The central axis of the extension lies on a radial line extending from the cylindrical vacuum vessel on the midplane of the vacuum vessel. The cylindrical extension and cover can be fabricated from carbon steel.

The magnet cartridge 17 is supported inside the vacuum vessel 11 by three concentric thin wall tubes 33, 35, and 37. The innermost tube 33 has external threads on either end and is fabricated from a material which is a good thermal insulator at cryogenic temperatures, such as G-10 epoxy resin bonded glass cloth. The innermost tube 33 is secured to the magnet cartridge by means of an internally threaded collet which is secured to the magnet cartridge. The collet 41 can be fabricated from a material such as aluminum. One end of the innermost tube is secured to the collet 41 by an epoxy-bonded threaded joint. Applying epoxy resin to the parts prior to threading them together results in a joint with good mechanical strength and no relative motion. The epoxy bonded threaded joint also results in a low thermal contact resistance which is useful when the sleeve is providing thermal coupling between two components.

The other end of the innermost tube is epoxy-bonded threaded in a collet 43 which has interior and exterior threads and an inwardly extending flange.

The intermediate tube 35 has internal threads on one end and external threads on the other and is fabricated from a high thermal conductivity material such as aluminum. The end of the tube with the internal threads forms an epoxy-bonded threaded joint with the exterior threads of collet 43. The externally threaded end of the intermediate tube 35 is connected to a ring 45 having internal and external threads and secured to thermal shield 25. The ring surrounds an opening in the thermal shield. The ring 45 and thermal shield 25 can be fabricated from aluminum, for example, and welded together.

The annular cover plate 31 closing off the cylindrical vacuum vessel extension includes a threaded nipple portion 47 on the inner surface of the cover. The threaded nipple and ring 45 are of the same diameter and are concentric with one another. The outer tube 37 is fabricated from a thermally insulating material such as G-10 and is joined between the external threads of the ring and the nipple by epoxy-bonded threaded joints.

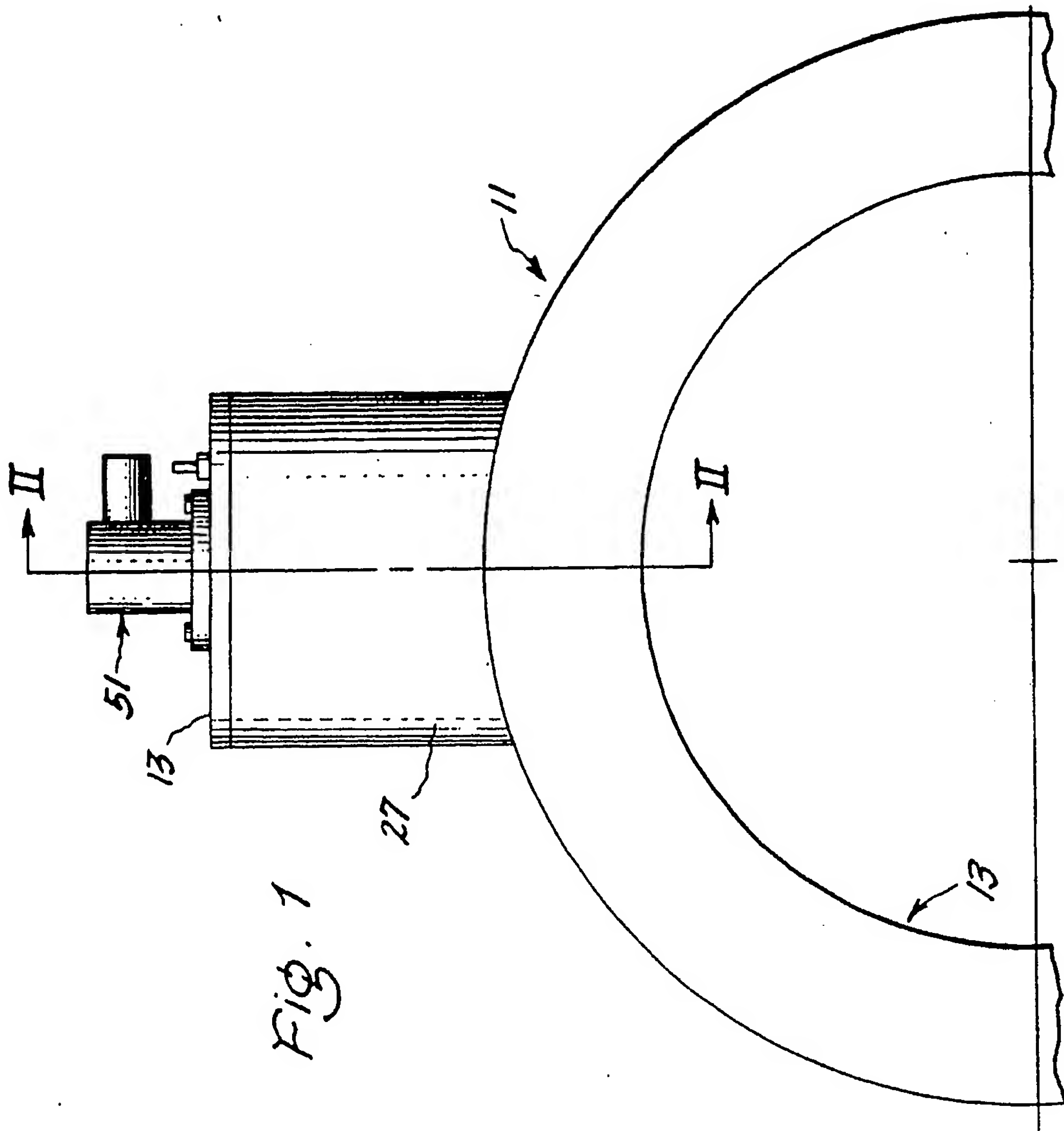
A two stage cryocooler 51 is mounted through the cover 31 and the cryocooler cold end 53 extends through the aperture into a separate vacuum enclosure defined by a first flexible bellows 55 of low thermal conductivity material welded to the annular opening of the cover 31 at one end and to a shoulder on a ring shaped first stage copper heat station 57 at the other. A second flexible bellows 61, also a part of the separate vacuum enclosure, which can also be fabricated from stainless steel, encloses the area between the first stage heat station 57 and a second stage heat station 63. The separate vacuum enclosure extends through an opening in the thermal shield with the second stage heat station 63 in contact with the magnet cartridge 17. The first stage heat station 57 which comprises a ring of high thermal conductivity material such as copper is supported from a flange portion of collet 43 by a plurality of circumferentially spaced spring loaded threaded rods 65. Each of the rods threadingly engage the first stage heat station 57 on one end and extend through a hole in the flange on collet 43 on the other. The portion of the rod extending through the flange on collet 43 is surrounded by Belleville washers 67 and secured in place by a nut 69. The spring 71 captured between the flange and ring and encircling the rod helps maintain the first stage heat station 57 position if the cold head 53 of the cryocooler is withdrawn. As bolts 73 securing the cryocooler 51 to the annular cover 31 are tightened, the first stage 75 of the cold end of the cryocooler pushes against the first stage heat station 57 which creates tension in rods by compressing the Belleville washers 67. The Belleville washers are stacked to create the desired interface pressure between the first stage heat station and the first stage of the cryocooler over a predetermined travel distance.

As the Belleville washers compress, the second stage 77 of the cold end contacts the second stage heat station 63. Thin sheets of a soft pure metal such as silver or indium can be used at the interface between the cryocooler stages and the heat stations. In the present embodiment thin sheets of indium foil, 0.005 inches * thick are used between the first cryocooler stage heat station and the first stage heat exchanger as well as between the second cryocooler stage and the second stage heat exchanger to provide low thermal contact resistance.

The first stage heat station is thermally connected to the flange of collet 43 by copper braids 81 which are welded or brazed, and bolted in place. The braids 81 allow for movement between the flange and the first stage heat station.

The suspension system in addition to support-

* 1 pound = 0.4536kg; 1 inch = 25.4mm



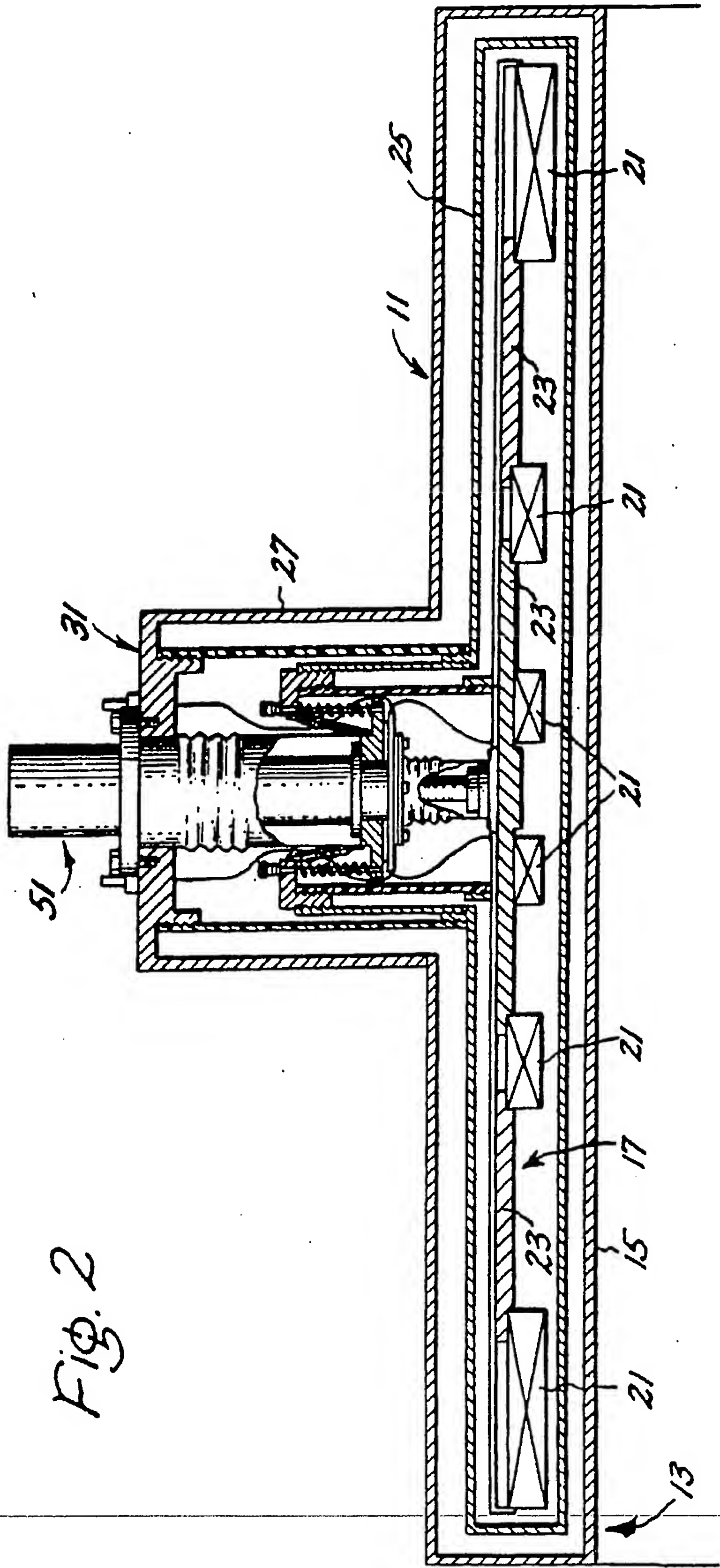
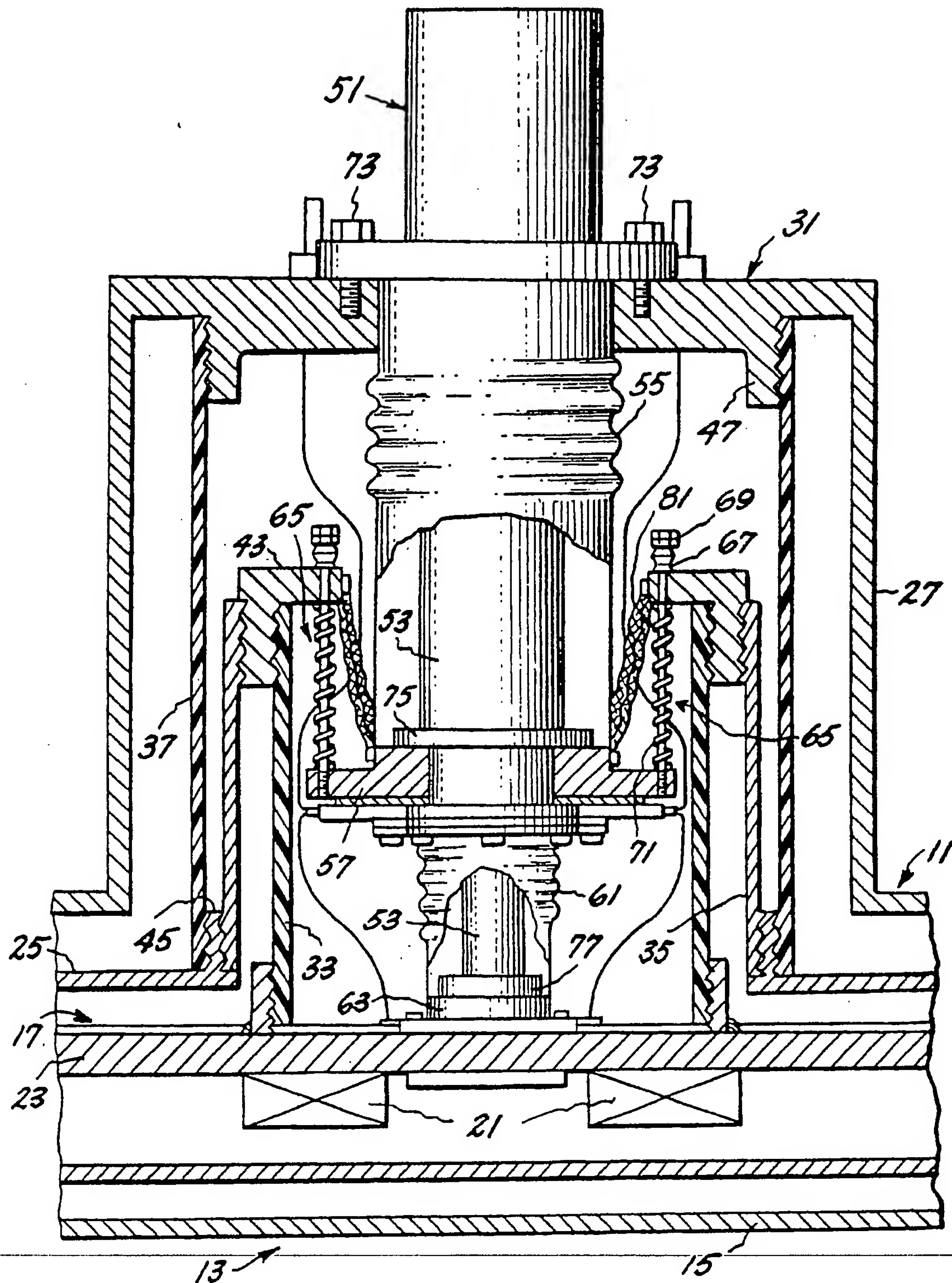


Fig. 2

Fig. 3





European
Patent Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 90 30 8963

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
A	FR-A-1 488 797 (SIEMENS-SCHUCKERTWERKE AKTIEN-GESELLSCHAFT) * page 3, left-hand column, last paragraph page 4, right-hand column, line 2 *	1,2	H 01 F 7/22 F 17 C 13/00 F 17 C 3/08 F 25 D 19/00
A	US-A-4 827 736 (DAIKIN INDUSTRIES LTD.) * column 5, lines 3 - 50 *	4,5	
A	EP-A-0 260 036 (OXFORD MAGNET TECHNOLOGY LTD.) * figure 3 *	1	
A	FR-A-2 085 198 (COMMISSARIAT A L'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE)		
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
			H 01 F F 17 C F 25 D
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of search	Examiner
The Hague		28 November 90	VANHULLE R.
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